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A N
A N S W E R
T O
Certain Passages
I N
Mr. W^{alsham}'s PREFACE
TO HIS
E D I T I O N of *Shakespear*,
Together with
Some R E M A R K S
O N T H E
M A N Y E R R O R S
A N D
F A L S E C R I T I C I S M S
I N T H E
W O R K I T S E L F.

L O N D O N :

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A N S W E R

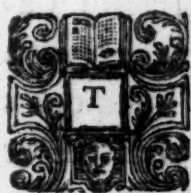
TO

Certain Pages

W O L



A N
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T O
Certain Passages
I N
Mr. *W*-----'s P R E F A C E, &c.



TURNING over lately the
Preface to Mr. *W*'s Edition of
Shakespear, I cou'd not but be
offended at his making so free
with the Character of an honourable Gen-
tleman who deserved much better of him
A than

than foul Words and Misrepresentations : But this Way of Writing is so familiar to Mr. *W.* that it is no Wonder he has fallen into it here, sacrificing, according to his Custom, Truth and good Manners to his unreasonable Passions and Self-sufficiency. It is not fitting, however, his Scurrility and Insolence should pass unregarded ; or that the World should be ignorant of the Cause of all this Outrage and Ill-treatment. Sir *T. H.* the Gentleman above hinted at, with whom Mr. *W.* has held a Correspondence on this Subject, was desirous of seeing published as handsome and correct an Edition of *Shakespear*, and withal at as easy a Rate to the Publick as possible : Mr. *W.* on the contrary, was for making a Profit of it to himself ; and, either from a Thirst of Gain, or from a Motive of Vanity, was for swelling the Edition with his own wild Conceits and injudicious Reflections : This Sir *T.* wou'd never consent to ; and hence all Mr. *W.*'s Malice, which he soon after display'd in
that

that ingenious memorable Note of his, tack'd to Mr. *Pope's* last Book of the *Dunciad* :—Mr. *Pope's* Quarrel to Sir *T.* was, that he presumed to republish an Author which had before pass'd through his Hands, and Mr. *W's*, that he should do it without his Participation. The honourable Gentleman, however, persisting in it, Mr. *W.* demanded back his Letters ; and in this he acted very wisely ; for I am told in them he has been as lavish in his Flatteries and Encomiums upon Sir *T's* Talents, as he has since been in his ungentlemanlike Reflections ; and it wou'd by no Means have look'd well to have been found contradicting himself. Whatever was Mr. *W's* Opinion of Sir *T.* I have good reason to believe that Gentleman's of him was always one and the same ; for he ever esteemed him to be as indifferent a Critick as he has proved himself a Reasoner in his other Works ; and was often heard to say, " The only Use he cou'd find in Mr. *W.* " was, in starting the Game ; he was

“not to be trusted in running it down.”
 So that if he ever made use of any other
 Emendations of Mr. *W*’s, than such as
 had before appear’d in Print, (which I
 apprehend every Man has a Right to) I
 am persuaded they were only those which
 happened to correspond with his own ;
 for he not only approved of few or none
 of what Mr. *W*. had sent him, but was
 very much upon his Guard in this Par-
 ticular, after Mr. *W*. had called for his
 Letters, well knowing this Gentleman’s
 Propensity to Abuse,—which he had ex-
 exercised so liberally upon other Occasions.
 — So much for the plain Matter of
 Fact, which it is but just the Publick
 should be informed of, that they may be
 able to pass a proper Judgment on Mr.
W’s Conduct in this Matter : In Con-
 firmation of it, I shall beg Leave to sub-
 join a Letter from a very candid as well
 as ingenious Critick, which tends not
 only to justify Sir *T*. but undeceive Mr.
W. likewise, by giving him to under-
 stand, that whatever he may think of
 himself,

himself, the World is not so universally agreed as he imagines, in subscribing to his critical Merits; and that he is so far from having improved upon the former Editions of *Shakespear*, that he has in Truth alter'd many Things for the Worse; and added others that no Man in his Senses can ever think of admitting:

S I R,

I H A V E lately received Mr. *W*'s *Shakespear*, and am very angry at his Treatment of Sir *T. H.* — Had any of Sir *T*'s Friends as inexorable Resentments as Mr. *W.* he has certainly given great Room for Payment in kind; for I believe I cou'd myself publish, in a few Weeks, an *Ostavo* of Mr. *W*'s Mistakes, together with his Want of Candour, in passing over, without Notice, some of the best Emendations of Sir *T.* — This is not at present my Province; but I shall endeavour, sometime or other, to set Sir *T*'s Character in a true Light,
and

and shall observe how much the Name of *Critick* has been brought into Contempt, by that rough, unmannerly, abusive Stile, which the Moderns have almost all dealt in, and which Sir *T.* of all Men living, was best qualified utterly to have expelled from the Regions of Criticism : — That Mr. *Pope* was extremely to blame for his Resentment to Sir *T.* since the latter's greatest Fault was paying too great a Deference to the Authority of his Edition ; and that Mr. *W*'s arose only from Sir *T*'s Desire of obliging the Publick with a beautiful Edition of his favourite Author, the Expence of which he generously bore a great Part of himself : It is true he might, perhaps, make use of some of Mr. *W*'s Emendations, which the latter looks on as an Invasion of his Property : But how could it be avoided ? Ought he not to have inserted what he thought the true Reading in every Passage, by whomsoever it had been communicated ? Unless therefore, Sir, *T.* had been engaged by
Pro-

Promise to him, to let him have a Profit from the Edition, which is not pretended, I cannot see that his Conduct deserves any thing from the Publick, but Gratitude for his Generosity. — Before I quit this Subject I shall trouble you with two or three of the many Instances I have collected of Mr. *W*'s bad Taste and Judgment: They are taken from the *Midsummer Night's Dream*; but I can assure you all the rest of the Plays do no less abound with his Errors than this, which is full of 'em. though I send you here but some few:

ACT I. Sc. 1.

—————She lingers my Desires
Like to a Step-Dame, or a Dowager,
Long *withering out* a young Man's
Revenue.

THE last Line, Mr. *W*. says, is certainly not good *English*;—to me it appears a fine Expression. — The Debts the young Man is obliged to contract,
Timber

Timber fell'd, and Lands impoverish'd,
 (the common Fate of jointur'd Estates)
 are all express'd by it : These and other
 Difficulties a young Man under such Cir-
 cumstances has to struggle with, may
 very properly be said to *wither out* his
 Revenue, — long *wintering on* contains
 neither so many, so just, nor such poeti-
 cal Ideas.

W — Edit. p. 95.

———— As a Form in Wax
 By him imprinted, and within his
 Power
 To *leave* the Figure, or disfigure it.

This seems to me very good Sense, and
 naturally expressed : Your Father has ab-
 solute Power over your Life ; as he gave
 it you, he can either *leave* you the Pos-
 session of it, or take it from you : The
 Simile of the Form in Wax is apposite to
 this ; but not content with plain *English*,
 Mr. *W*. wou'd engraft a *French* Word
 upon our Author, *leve*, which by no
 Means

Means answers so naturally, and is little better than Tautology ; for the Impression of a Seal on Wax gives the *Relief*, and once given it is not heighten'd or *re-lieved* farther : A Seal-Cutter may heighten the *Relief* on a Seal, but not the Impression on the Wax, when it is once made.——

Mr. *W*'s Reading therefore is no more than this :——

——You are but as a Form of Wax
By him imprinted, and within his
Power
T imprint the Figure, or disfigure it.

ACT II. Sc. I.

The human Mortals want their Winter *here*.

Mr. *W*. reads, *beryd* ; an old obsolete Word, used, as he says, by *Chaucer* and *Spencer*, for praised or celebrated ; but this is a Reason rather why *Shakespear*

B wou'd

wou'd not have made use of the Word; for he by no Means affects an obsolete Stile; and it wou'd be a Fault in a Dramatick Poet to do it: *Spencer*, indeed, professedly adopted almost all *Chaucer's* Language, and it was proper to his Subjects; it gave an Air of Antiquity to his Allegories, and of Rusticity to his Pastorals: Now these few which *Shakespear* makes Use of, are almost all to be found in *Fletcher*, *Johnson*, and the rest of the Drammatick Poets of his Age: *Chaucer*, therefore, *Spencer*, and *Mandevil*, are not sufficient Authority for the Insertion of any Word into the Text of *Shakespear*; much less is *Skinner*, or any of the Glossarists; unless Mr. *W*—— can prove the Use of the Word by any of his Contemporaries, among which *Spencer*, as was observed, is not to be included: And if this be admitted to be a good Rule, it would cut off at least one Fourth of all Mr. *W*——'s Emendations; for he seems to have a more than ordinary Fondness for Obsoleteness. But there

there is a particular, besides this general Objection, to the Word *beryd*; it gives the very same Idea with the following Line,

No Night is now with *Hymn* or *Carol*
blest ———

for to *bery* is to celebrate with Praise; so that what Mr. *W*—— brings as a Proof is really a Disproof of his Conjecture: For, there is scarce any Writer in the World so careful of avoiding Tautology as *Shakespeare*. The Place is allowed to be corrupt; but surely, the Emendation inserted in the *Oxford* Edition ————
Want their Winter's *Cheer*——— is so easy, so close to the Letter, and gives a Sense so consonant to the Context, that no Man less given to Contradiction than Mr. *W*——, would be inclined to disallow of it. It is something particular here, that Mr. *W*——, who is so fond of exposing, when he can, all the Conjectures in the *Oxford* Edition, should omit purposely any Mention of this; and seems to
be

be a greater Argument of his Modesty than his Ingenuity. The next Alteration is pass'd over in the same Manner, that his own may stand unrival'd :

————— The *Spring*, the *Summer*,
The chiding *Autumn*, angry *Winter*,
change
Their wonted Liveries, and th'amaz'd
World
By their *Increase* now knows not which
is which.

Let any unprejudic'd Person, weighing the Sense of this Passage, say, whether *In-verse*, which the *Oxford* Edition makes it, is not to be preferr'd to Mr. *W*——'s *In-chase*? Indeed, if Uncommonness and Stiffness are Arguments for either, Mr. *W*——, it must be confessed, is in the right.

Again, Mr. *W*——, in *Page* 136, passes over a Conjecture of the *Oxford* Editor, fearing, I suppose, it might strike the impartial Reader in Preference to his own—

Can

Can you not hate me, as I know you
do,

But you must join in *Souls* to mock me
too?

The *Oxford* Edition alters it to, in
Flouts.

Mr. *W* — to *Insolents*.

Pag. 148.

So doth the Woodbine, the sweet Ho-
neyfuckle

Gently entwist, the *female* Joy so
Enrings the barky Fingers of the Elm.

Here we have a Word foisted in, and
another removed by Mr. *W* —, without
Necessity or Authority: He will have it,

Gently Entwist the *Maple*, throwing
out the Word *Female*; whereas, if we will
but take the Honeyfuckle for the Flower,
and the Woodbine for the Stalk or Tree,
which may be done without any great Vi-
olence, the Sense is very easy and intelli-
ble,

ble, making *Honeysuckie* the Nominative Case ; or, as it is pointed in the *Oxford* Edition, making *Woodbine* and *Honeysuckle* a Repetition only of the same Thing. I can see no Sort of Reason for any Alteration at all ; for I do not know whether the Repetition here is not rather a Beauty than to be condemned as Tautology : I am sure, excludeng the Epithet *Female*, the prettiest and most poetical Word in the Sentence, and introducing the flat unauthorized Word *Maple* in its stead, is making bad, granting it to be so already much worse.

P. 159.

Merry and tragical ? tedious and brief ?
That is hot Ice, and wond'rous *strange*
Snow.

The *Oxford* Edition has it, wond'rous *scorching* Snow. Mr. W— a wond'rous *strange Shew* ! — Let the candid and impartial Reader judge which is preferable ; the former preserves the poetick Spirit,
Au-

Antithesis, and Measures, the latter, in my humble Conceit, not one of them all.— And such, Sir, are most of Mr. W——'s Alterations, which any Man, who will give himself the Trouble of examining them, will soon discover, and, I dare venture to promise, as certainly condemn.

I am,

Your humble Servant.



(17)

And all, and moreover, the latter, in my
human conduct, not one of them all—
the rest, so, the rest of Mr. W.—
which my Man, who will
give him the right of examining
them, will soon discover, and I dare
venture to predict, he certainly cannot.